

to become energy independent. It is creating jobs, 3,000 of them, at or near the solar plant under construction in Buffalo, New York.

Solar panels empower consumers to generate clean and affordable energy at home and to sell the extra energy that they do not use to the grid. A policy called "net metering," which requires utilities to pay a fair price for this energy to the consumer, is currently in place in all but six States. It has been vital to the growth of the solar industry by providing consumers with certainty on the savings that solar will produce in their energy bill.

That is why I have introduced legislation to direct the Department of Energy to conduct a study on all of the impacts of net metering. Through a comprehensive analysis, we can ensure that regulators and policymakers have the accurate information they need to make a sound decision on whether to support consumer-generated solar energy.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT VETOED

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, my heart breaks for our military men and women who last week watched their Commander in Chief as he vetoed the NDAA, the National Defense Authorization Act. This was a bill that would give them more pay and better benefits for the job that they are doing. He vetoed it, great flourish, called a ceremony.

He vetoed the bill because he wanted more money for his domestic agenda that includes more money for broken agencies like the EPA and the IRS. Imagine that.

In Congress, our first responsibility is to provide for the common defense, and the NDAA just does that.

This year's defense bill passed both the House and the Senate with an overwhelming bipartisan majority. It is the most reform-centered defense bill in decades.

It includes pay and benefits for our troops. Did you know 83 percent of our military personnel have retired with no retirement benefits? It changes that.

The President vetoed it. It would have given them 401(k)-style benefits. The President vetoed it. He should be ashamed of those actions. The men and women in uniform deserve better.

NATION'S CRUMBLING INFRASTRUCTURE

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, well, it is long past time for Congress to do its job and get serious about funding a long-term solution to fix our crumbling roads and bridges, all of our infrastructure in this country.

In Michigan, of all States, we know that we need to invest in order to grow our economy. To build a 21st century economy, we need state-of-the-art infrastructure.

No more short-term fixes, no more month-to-month funding. I have voted against these short-term bills in the past, and I am going to continue to do so.

We are in urgent need of dramatic investment in infrastructure. Nearly a third of our roads are in poor or mediocre condition. One out of four of our bridges require significant repair. In my own hometown, our water infrastructure is wholly inadequate to provide even clean water to our residents.

We just cannot continue to threaten our economy by failing to do our job. Congress needs to do its job. The American people go to work every single day, and the least that they can expect is that we do the same thing and do our job.

If we really believe in our future in this Congress, we ought to be willing to invest in it.

FAIRNESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MARRIED HOUSEHOLDS WITH STUDENT LOANS ACT

(Mr. MARCHANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARCHANT. Mr. Speaker, student loan debt is now the fastest growing and second-largest type of household debt in America. It is no surprise that many Americans are putting off marriage and family life for financial reasons.

The decline in marriage is a problem that could impact our economy and society for decades to come. Yet, our Tax Code punishes married households who have student debt. That is why I have introduced the Fairness and Opportunities for Married Households With Student Loans Act.

Currently, an individual with student loans can deduct up to \$2,500 in interest paid on their loans, but that amount does not increase for married couples filing jointly. So spouses who both have student loan debt are limited to just one \$2,500 deduction. This is not fair.

My bill increases the deduction to \$5,000 for married couples. It only makes sense. It also strengthens incentives toward marriage and financial independence.

With student debt putting pressure on our economy, let's stop penalizing marriage and start helping families build a stronger future.

2015 JOBS FAIR AND ECONOMY

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I recently hosted my third annual hiring event where 500 applicants connected with more than 70 employers looking to fill positions.

I was delighted to see Ramona Young and Sommatra Jackson at the event, two women hired at my first event in 2013. They were back this year representing the company that hired them.

Their success continues to motivate me. For every Ramona and Sommatra, there are hundreds of Americans looking for good-paying jobs that allow them to build toward a future.

So today I rise on behalf of those American workers still looking for good-paying jobs.

We all know the statistics. Our economy is growing. After 67 months of consecutive job growth, our unemployment rate stands at 5.1 percent for the first time since 2008, but the fact is there are nearly 8 million Americans still searching.

The people I met at my hiring event were talented, skilled, and driven. They are hungry for an opportunity to work, to put their skills to good use, and to provide for their families.

I urge my colleagues to join me in creating an economy that works for everyone.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

(Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Far too many families fall victim to domestic violence. In fact, one in four women will experience domestic violence at some point in their lives.

I want to recognize and thank the organizations, their staff, and their volunteers across my district for what they do to help victims of domestic violence.

To cite just one example, Mr. Speaker, last week the Berks Women in Crisis held their annual Silent Witness Project march and ceremony to honor and remember victims lost. A group of about 75 people marched from the Berks Women in Crisis center to the Reading Area Community College, carrying 25 red silhouettes of women, men, and children killed due to domestic violence. Each cutout held a brass shield with the summary of that victim's story.

By spreading awareness of these horrors of domestic violence and encouraging victims to speak up, we can and must help reduce the number of women victimized.

I applaud the efforts of this annual ceremony and march and want to let them know that their work is recognized by the community. Indeed, the work of all the organizations, their staff, and volunteers is critical.